CANDID AND IMPARTIAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PRELIMINARY ARTICLES OF PEACE WITH FRANCE AND SPAIN, AND THE PROVISIONAL TREATY WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

By a COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

LONDON:
Printed for J. ROBSON, Bookseller, New Bond-street.
MDCCLXXXIII.

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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

PRELIMINARY ARTICLES, &c.

HE who writes on any great political queſtion of the day often deceives himſelf by adopting miſtaken opinions, or more frequently attempts to deceive his fellow-citizens by the publication of falſe aſſertions, and intereſted arguments. In the former caſe he is pardonable; in the latter he is inexcuſable: no attention to procure the beſt information can at all times protect the moſt candid and enlightened enquirer from the former misfortune; but nothing but the moſt flagrant and intentional guilt can betray him into the latter; it may ſurely be emphatically called a misfor-

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tune, when the object is, at the ſame time, criminal and unhappy.

The writer of theſe ſheets is concerned in the ſubject, merely as a citizen of the empire, unconnected with any party, and of no political conſequence; he ventures to ſuggeſt a few hints and obſervations, at this moſt important criſis, without a wiſh to gratify private intereſt or public malevolence, careleſs of cenſure or applauſe from any reader, who may throw his eye over theſe pages with any other view than that of cool and deliberate inveſtigation.

In the preſent ſeaſon of national difficulty it is the duty of every member of this free ſtate to turn his attention to the ſituation of public affairs, and to contemplate with calmneſs and reflection the great ſcene before him: the projecting part of the picture, that which throws all the other far into the back ground,

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is the peace now on the tapis with the different nations, with which we have been long engaged in an unhappy and deſtructive war; the great outlines of the peace have been drawn by the reſpective plenipotentiaries and commiſſioners of the contending powers, and will ſoon be confirmed by a definitive treaty; it may not be amiſs that every man, for every man is concerned, ſhould expreſs his ſentiments on an occaſion where ſomewhat may be found to blame, and ſomewhat to commend: by the communication of various ideas, information may be extended; ſome lights may be thrown on ſubjects not univerſally conſidered, and ſome errors may be removed into which the public mind may have fallen by various attempts to miſlead, excited by mean, perſonal envy, or diſappointed ambition, and plann'd by a reſtleſs and artful ingenuity,

Whoever wiſhes to eſtimate the terms of this peace with judgment and impartiality muſt take into his conſideration the preſent ſituation of this country. He will then behold it, as it is, and not as he wiſhes it to be; the object of his ſenſes, not of his imagination; oppreſſed by the accumulated miſeries of a long and unſucceſsful war; a war rendered particularly diſadvantageous by the number and ſtrength of the powers to which we are oppoſed; by the remoteneſs of the theatre on which the bloody ſcenes are acted; by the infinite expence of tranſportation of forces, ſtores, and proviſions to various garriſons detached in different parts of the world; by the immenſe increaſe of a ruinous national debt; by an almoſt univerſal decay of commerce and manufactures; by an hourly extending difficulty in recruiting our fleets and armies; and by what may be deemed the worſt of all national misfortunes, the want of a truly enlarged public

public ſpirit, and an extinction of that real patriotiſm, which, in the threatening hour of danger, ever points to national unanimity, as the only path to national ſecurity.

Of the three foreign powers leagued againſt us in this war, one was our ancient and natural ally; however her councils may of late have been warped by the inſidious policy, or the more public influence of a powerful and domineering neighbour, her real intereſts are ſtill connected with ours; ſhe is the firmeſt continental ſupport of the conſtitutional independence of Britain; every native of the united Low Countries, who has looked into the records of paſt time, or turns his eye towards the future, muſt dread the increaſing power of the Houſe of Bourbon, and can find no poiſe to that immenſe bulk, but the weight of the Britiſh empire hung on the oppoſite end of the lever. Such have been, and ſuch muſt

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ever be the decided ſentiments of the genuine patriots of Holland; in the general commotion of parties and intereſts artfully rouſed to an unnatural war, the ſtill, ſmall voice of truth was drowned in the tumult of the bribed and infatuated multitude; but the return of peace, with the bleſſings of commerce in her train, will ſoon remove the deluſion.

Many of our moſt worthy and intelligent citizens were averſe to the proſecution of a war againſt theſe our natural and original allies, and their powerful oppoſition rendered it additionally difficult to maintain, if not totally impracticable.

But the general ſyſtem of the war had additional obſtacles to encounter; founded originally on an unfortunate diſſention with our fellow-citizens beyond the Atlantic, on motives which I think it now unneceſſary to praiſe or cenſure, it involved, in its riſe and progreſs, the paſſions,

ſions, the habits, the connections, and the intereſts of many of the ableſt, the moſt virtuous, and moſt diſtinguiſhed inhabitants of theſe kingdoms; many ſuch oppoſed the proſecution of it with the moſt laudable intentions, and by the vigour and perſeverance of their oppoſition obtained that famous vote of the Houſe of Commons, which rendered the effectual proſecution of the war impracticable, and conſequently left no alternative but Peace. —Hard muſt be the fate of him who is bound by duty, as well as neceſſity, to graſp at an object, and becomes criminal by the attainment!

Never was there a period in our hiſtory, except that of the dreadful civil war in the laſt century, in which the baneful influence of party ſpirit had more pervaded all orders and profeſſions, than the age in which we live; in the virtuous days of Greece and Rome, the Grecian or Roman ſoldier, while in the field, had

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no enemies but thoſe of his country; his conteſts in the Areopagus, or his harangues in the Forum, were forgotten till the battle was fought, and the triumph of his general reſtored him to the buſy commotions of civil life. The ſtates of Greece were uſually engaged in petty, inteſtine wars, till neceſſity aſſembled them in one great cauſe againſt the power of Perſia; on ſuch an occaſion the heat of private rancour was cooled; perſonal animoſity was forgotten; even that virtuous paſſion of local jealouſy, founded on local patriotiſm, was ſuſpended.—Themiſtocles, labouring for the welfare of united Greece, bade his rival colleague "ſtrike, but hear," and forgot the man and the Athenian in the general cauſe of his country.

Who can forbear drawing the dreadful humiliating contraſt?—Let the voice of contending and accuſing parties, which ſtill echoes in our ſenates, and brawls in our

our public ſtreets, bear witneſs to the diſgraceful truth; let the ill ſucceſs of our fleets; let the capture of our armies; let the conſequential loſs of our provinces record to poſterity at leaſt one diſhonourable ſource of our national misfortunes; and may the faithful pen of hiſtory mark with infamy to ages yet unborn, thoſe who may be found guilty of ſuch atrocious violations of every public duty.

Such then muſt appear the ſtate of this country; engaged in a wide-waſting war with various powers, among the reſt with our ancient and real ally, and with our numerous, powerful, and once well-affected fellow-citizens; without a ſingle ally in the wide extent of the Univerſe, feebly ſupported by an heterogeneous army of ſtipendaries, not auxiliaries, compoſed from different nations not united to us by common intereſts, a common language, or any other bond of ſocial connection; the native part of our army divided by

private envy and jealouſy, by public rancour and malevolence—Our fleets diſunited by faction; the Union flag of Britain changed into the enſign of Diſcord; our civil councils jarring and divided; no great and conſiſtent plan of war adopted, or indeed at this time practicable; no conſtant influx of reſources to ſupport the continuance of hoſtilities, or the various exigencies of a ſtate engaged in more than Quixotic adventures; the landed intereſt of the nation loſing ſight of viſionary aids and air-drawn ſubſidies which an ideal America held forth to their diſtempered imagination; the commercial intereſt alarmed and deſponding; all united in the cry for peace, and in nothing elſe; all ready to hail the Dove, which ſhould return to their long wandering Ark with the branch of Olive; all ſighing for an Ararat, on which to reſt from the agitation of the tempeſt.

The Dove is at length returned—Has ſhe returned in vain, or has ſhe brought

the real Olive? That is the queſtion I wiſh to diſcuſs, always keeping in view our preſent relative ſituation; expecting from miniſters what is fairly practicable; neither excuſing their negligence, if ſuch ſhall be found, nor expecting impoſſibilities from their zeal, their knowledge, or their vigilance.

I mean therefore to make ſome obſervations on the preliminaries with France and Spain, and the proviſional treaty with America, in the order in which they were lay'd before both Houſes of Parliament, and ſince printed by Authority.

Firſt with FRANCE as to Newfoundland and the Fiſheries.

The King of Great Britain retains, as before, the full ſovereignty of the iſland of Newfoundland and the adjacent iſlands (except St. Pierre and Miquelon) as the whole was ceded to him by the 13th ar-

ticle of the treaty of Utrecht. France had a right by the 13th article of the treaty of Utrecht to take fiſh, dry them on land, and erect ſtages and huts for that purpoſe only, from Cape Bonaviſta on the eaſt ſide of the iſland round by the north to Point Riche on the weſt ſide: this right was confirmed by the fifth article of the treaty of Paris, and the preſent preliminary articles alter the ſtipulations of the treaty of Utrecht only in the boundary line, which is now on the eaſt ſide at Cape St. John, much farther north than Cape Bonaviſta the former boundary, and extending round by the north to Cape Ray on the weſt ſide, farther ſouth than Point Riche the former weſtern boundary, thus taking away from France, on the eaſt ſide, where the fiſhery is moſt profitable, a line of coaſt equal to what is added on the weſtern ſide, and leaving the reſpective rights of fiſhery of both nations nearly in the ſame ſituation

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in which they were placed by the treaties already mentioned.

The iſlands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, very ſmall and barren ſpots near the ſouth ſide of Newfoundland, were, by the 6th article of the treaty of Paris, ceded in full right to France; by the preſent articles they are to be ceded to her in the ſame manner.

By the treaty of Paris the French had the liberty of fiſhing in the gulf of St. Lawrence at the diſtance of three leagues from the coaſt of the continent and iſlands; this liberty is confirmed by the preſent articles; whether the definitive treaty ſhall extend this right nominally to the coaſt of Cape Breton and Nova Scotia, or make any regulations on that ſubject, I am unable to determine, thinking however that this right will be exerciſed by France under the 5th article of the treaty of Paris, and the 18th article of the preſent preliminaries.

Thus we ſee, that, after this very unfortunate war, we have been able to preſerve theſe branches of our trade and marine, as far as France is concerned, nearly in the ſame ſituation in which it was placed by ſome of our ableſt negociators at the cloſe of the two moſt glorious and ſucceſsful wars in which this nation was ever engaged.

In the WEST INDIES the war in general has, on our part, been exceedingly unfortunate; with the exception of one very brilliant and conſpicuous day, the memorable 12th of April 1782, every hour has almoſt been marked by diſaſter; many of our beſt iſlands have ſucceſſively fallen into the hands of our enemies; of the *ſeven* which have been thus captured, only *one* has been retained by the French, and that perhaps among the moſt inconſiderable—TOBAGO, ſituated very far to the ſouthward, and remote from our other Caribbée iſlands, as yet much unſettled

ſettled and uncultivated, ſeems but a ſlight recompence for ſuch iſlands as GRENADA and the GRENADINES, SAINT VINCENT, DOMINICA, SAINT CHRISTOPHER'S, NEVIS, and MONTSERRAT. The iſland of GRENADA in the ſcale of commerce and national importance, outweighs many TOBAGO's; that able and excellent writer, the late Dr. Campbell, in his Political Survey of Great Britain, gives the higheſt degree of praiſe to its climate, its ſoil, and its productions; he mentions its freedom from the blaſt, its ſecurity from hurricanes, its abundance of rivers and ſprings; the plenty of ground proviſions, vegetables of all kinds, rich fruits, animals, river and ſea fiſh. As to its productions that enter into commerce, he ſays, that it is generally allowed, that whatever they are, Sugar, Cocoa, Coffee, Cotton, or Tobacco, for all in their turn have been raiſed there, they are the very beſt in their reſpective kinds; he mentions, that it hath been further aſſerted,

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by very good authority, that the true cinnamon and nutmeg trees have been found in the foreſts, probably a future ſubject of moſt profitable commerce.

The ports of Grenada are many and excellent, particularly thoſe of Calivenie, and the harbour of Fort Royal or the old Port, which are ſafe and deep, and ſufficiently capacious to receive in each of them a large fleet of ſhips of the line.

The celebrated and philoſophic Abbé Raynal ſpeaks of this iſland in terms of the warmeſt approbation; he calls it the ſecond of the Britiſh Weſt India iſlands; ſecond only to Jamaica; a few years ſince, while in our poſſeſſion, its exports amounted to more than ſix hundred thouſand pounds ſterling.

After the late moſt glorious war, when we were in poſſeſſion of Martinico, Guadaloupe, and a cluſter of other conquered

quered iſlands, when our fleets enabled us to monopolize the ſugar and rum trades, and when we were enabled to dictate the terms of peace, our prudent negociators thought it impolitic to irritate to madneſs a proſtrate enemy, and unjuſt to the commercial world to graſp at a monopoly, which muſt have excited againſt us all the nations of the earth; the conquered iſlands were therefore reſtored; the neutral iſlands were divided; we were contented to enjoy the GRENADES, ST. VINCENT, DOMINICA, and TOBAGO, all that time of very little value: in the preſent moment, in the day of our mourning and adverſity, the ſpirit and ability of our negociators have procured for us, together with the reſtitution of all our original iſlands, that of all thoſe formerly neutral iſlands, except Tobago; not as before, in their weak and imperfect ſtate, but fully productive, peopled, and wealthy; every moment growing into ſtrength; long paſt the

feebleneſs of infancy, and ripening into manhood.

Need I mention particularly the importance of SAINT VINCENT; its happy ſituation and great extent, the variety and wealth of its productions, its many good bays and harbours, particularly that of KINGSTON, where the largeſt ſhips may ride ſafely and commodiouſly? Nor is it more neceſſary to detail the infinite advantages of DOMINICA, placed by nature, as it were, for our benefit between Martinico and Guadaloupe, the future rival of both, and a prodigious ſupport to the weſtern commerce of this country.

Our old, original iſlands, which are all reſtored to us, are too well known to require any obſervations on their great and riſing importance.

By the treaty of Paris, SAINT LUCIA was confirmed to the French; its harbour

bour alone renders it valuable; the ſoil is ungrateful; the air peſtilential; many of our valuable officers, ſeamen, and ſoldiers, have periſhed there ſince our late acquiſition of this fatal iſland; ſmall, very ſmall remains of thoſe regiments are now to be ſeen, who garriſoned Morne Fortuné and the other forts when the gallant BARRINGTON ſo ſucceſsfully repulſed the fleet of d'Eſtaign.—Thoſe few gallant men can atteſt the truth of what I now write on this ſubject.

France has always thought the poſſeſſion of ST. LUCIA highly neceſſary to the commercial ſecurity of Martinico, and, influenced by this idea, inſiſted on the excluſive dominion of it even after her various defeats in the former war; ſhe obtained what ſhe then demanded, and is it poſſible to ſuppoſe that, in her preſent hour of proſperity, any dexterity of our miniſters could induce her to relinquiſh ſo favourite an object?

The harbours of Barbadoes, St. Vincent, and Grenada, lying to windward of the old French iſlands, will always ſufficiently enable us to annoy them in time of war; in the ſeaſon of peace the poſſeſſion of St. Lucia, that grave of Europeans, may be truly reckoned a misfortune; the power which is to be loaded with that incumbrance pays very dearly for the poſſible advantages ſhe may derive from it in the period of war; the firſt hour of hoſtility muſt expoſe its feeble and feveriſh garriſon to the ſucceſsful *coup de main* of an enterprizing enemy.

Thus far it muſt appear that the *Weſt India* part of this treaty, and one of the moſt important, is not only prudent but honourable; not ſuch as may be ſuppoſed to darken the ſullen brow of defeat, but ſuch as may well adorn the forehead of victory.

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In AFRICA we have had eternal contentions with France, founded on a miſtaken policy in both nations; commerce is uſually ill ſupported by monopoly, but in that country monopoly is alſo impracticable; true policy points out the neceſſity of aſcertaining the territorial rights of both nations, and leaving enough to each to anſwer every purpoſe of fair and juſt convenience; thus a generous emulation is the parent of wealth, and induſtry alone produces commercial ſuperiority. By the preſent treaty SENEGAL and ſome ſmall forts, which had belonged to France before the war of 1756, are ceded to that power, and SENEGAMBIA and SAINT JAMES's FORT, the moſt capital ſettlements in Africa, are confirmed to Britain; GOREE, which had originally belonged to France, and was reſtored to her by the treaty of Paris, is again reſtored by the preſent preliminary articles; all the remaining parts of Africa, with the immenſe trade of Guinea, Congou, Angola, &c.

&c. are left in their former ſituation: thus Britain is ſtill left in poſſeſſion of that great ſuperiority in the African trade which ſhe has ſo long enjoyed; by which many of her firſt ports have been ſuſtained, and by which LIVERPOOL particularly, from a meagre and inconſiderable borough, has become a place of infinite induſtry, wealth, and population.

In the EAST INDIES the King of Great Britain reſtores the French ſettlements which he had taken on the coaſts of Bengal and Orixa, alſo Pondicherry and Karical on the coaſt of Coromandel, with certain ſmall diſtricts contiguous, parts of the dependencies which originally belonged to theſe ſettlements while in the poſſeſſion of France; and alſo Mahé and their commercial eſtabliſhment at Surat on the Malabar Coaſt, with ſuch liberty of trade in that country as they formerly poſſeſſed.

Let thoſe who conſider the ſituation of the few French ſettlements in Bengal and Orixa, ſurrounded by many and much more powerful Britiſh eſtabliſhments; who know that CHANDERNAGORE, their principal place in BENGAL, is on the river Hughly, commanded by the maritime force of our Eaſt India Company, and very near our ſtrong and powerful fort of CALCUTTA, which lies between it and the Sea; let thoſe who are informed that CHANDERNAGORE and the other French eſtabliſhments in Bengal and Orixa are totally open and unfortified, and muſt remain ſo by the 11th article of the treaty of Paris, confirmed by the 18th article of the preſent preliminaries, and who ſee that by the preſent treaty France obtains "*liberty to ſurround Chandernagore with a* "*ditch for draining the waters*;" let thoſe who are inſtructed that Bengal and the other three provinces near the Ganges are abſolutely ſubject to our Eaſt India Company, whoſe power there is irreſiſtible;

ſiſtible; let all ſuch determine, whether the trade of France in that country is not in a moſt precarious ſtate, and entirely dependent on the will and intereſt of Britain.

There exiſts not a Seapoy in the Eaſt India Company's ſervice, who is unacquainted with the depopulated ſtate of the diſtricts of Pondicherry and Karical on the coaſts of Coromandel; of the inſufficiency of their roads and harbours, of their total want of military defence, and the impoſſibility of reſtoring their fortifications without the moſt ruinous expence; and of the little conſequence of *Mahé* and the French comptoir of Surat on the Malabar ſide; even ſuch a Seapoy muſt ſee, that the French nation, under the name of reſtitution in the Eaſt Indies, has been reſtored only to the ſtruggles of enterprizing poverty, and the unſucceſsful efforts of their national activity.

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The want of a ſolid and connected government in India, the want of a regular fund and territorial revenue, the want of good harbours either on the coaſt of Coromandel or Malabar, the neceſſity of retreating to the diſtant iſles of France or Bourbon on the ſlighteſt naval diſaſter, in ſhort, a thouſand wants and a thouſand neceſſities oppreſs the commerce and power of France in the Eaſtern world, ſo as to prevent its ever becoming, by itſelf, in any degree dangerous to thoſe of Britain.

By the 16th Article of theſe preliminaries, the Indian Allies of France, and among them Hyder Ally, muſt be entirely detached from her intereſt; the ſkill of the Company's ſervants will eaſily compleat that diſunion which has thus been created by the ability of our negociators.

Little more remains to render the Britiſh power in India at all times formidable and ſecure; a ſafe and capacious port, fit to receive heavy ſhips of war; eaſily defenſible; ſituated conveniently for every kind of oriental commerce, and protected from thoſe fatal Monſoons which have ſo often deſtroyed our beſt equipped trading veſſels, and rendered all our naval operations dangerous and uncertain; that alone is wanting, and that may poſſibly be procured by the negociation now depending with Holland; the uncontrouled and full dominion of Trincomalé would effectually place the power of Britain in India far above the reach of her moſt jealous and formidable enemies.

The articles in former treaties which relate to Dunkirk contributed to hurt the pride of France, without doing any eſſential ſervice to the intereſts of Britain; in a few weeks after the commencement

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of hoſtilities againſt France, the port of Dunkirk was ſufficiently repaired to receive and fit out veſſels of force, and even frigates; it can never be rendered capable of receiving ſhips of the line, and can therefore never become more than a neſt for privateers and light veſſels, to which uſe it may always be converted in defiance of our ſtrongeſt oppoſition; the miniſter eaſily ſaw that it was right to concede what could not be with-holden, and that this was not the ſeaſon to aſſume the tone of uſeleſs inſult. Thoſe articles are therefore wiſely abrogated and ſuppreſſed by the preſent preliminaries.

The ſubſequent articles with France relate to priſoners, prizes, the epocha's to take place as to reſtitution and ſurrender in different parts of the world, and other circumſtances of courſe and in the ordinary ſtyle of negociation.—I ſhall only obſerve, that by the 18th Article, pro-

perly managed, ſome advantages in trade may be obtained, and that by the 19th, Hudſon's Bay, Bencoolen, and other places taken from us, not particularly ſpecified, muſt be reſtored.

Thus have I gone through the ſeveral articles with FRANCE, in which I have found little on which the trumpet of faction can ſound even an imaginary triumph; the great demagogue himſelf, who has arrogantly aſſumed the moſt ſacred of all titles, THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE, will attempt in vain to depreciate this part of the treaty, though his ſtrongeſt efforts will probably be directed againſt it; he will roll his brazen thunder for ſome time longer, 'till even the meaneſt of his friends ſhall detect the impoſture, and the offended PEOPLE, the real political Jupiter, ſhall hurl the rhetorical Salmoneus into the abyſs of infamy.

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The Articles with SPAIN are few, and may eaſily be diſcuſſed.

The only alledged utility of MINORCA is grounded on the ſuppoſition of it's affording protection to our trade in the Mediterranean, and enabling our fleets to annoy our enemies in that ſea.—I ſhall now endeavour to enquire into the truth of this poſition.

Our Mediterranean trade, in time of peace, extends to Spain, France, Italy, Greece, and the Levant; in time of war with the houſe of Bourbon, the two former kingdoms are neceſſarily cut off from our trade—in time of peace, our trade in that ſea ſtands in no need of protection; even the Barbary ſtates are our allies, and we alone, of all the nations in Europe, whiten that ſea with our ſails in perfect ſecurity; I have known Britiſh conſuls in the Mediterranean make a ſcandalous and injurious traffic of this privilege, and

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ſell the benefit of the Engliſh flag to the ſhips of rival nations.—In time of war our trade is confined to the coaſts of Italy, Greece, and the Levant, from all which countries Minorca is far diſtant, and out of the ſailing courſe, particularly that of Greece and the Levant; all the ports of Italy, Villa-franca, and Nice, where we ſhip ſilk, wine, fruit, and oil; Genoa and its whole Riviera, Leghorn, and Naples (to all which we reſort for ſimilar commodities, and to all which, in our act ſhips, we export our native productions and manufactures to a great amount) afford ample protection to our ſhips of war and privateers, and gladly receive our veſſels employed in that trade; Leghorn, as a ſtation for cruizers, has ever been more uſeful to us than Mahon, and in the war of 1741, Villa-franca received our moſt numerous fleets, and from the ſituation of that port, they were enabled to diſtreſs the commerce and counteract the naval operations of France much

much more effectually than could have been done from the diſtant harbour of Mahon.

How little the poſſeſſion of Minorca can aſſiſt our trade to Sicily, to the coaſts of the Adriatic, to the Greek iſlands, to Alexandria, or to the other ports of the Levant, the ſlighteſt acquaintance with commerce and geography will eaſily enable us to determine.

In the preſent and laſt wars Minorca ſoon fell a prey to the invader; lying at the doors of France and Spain, and at a great diſtance from ours, the attack is quick, cheap, and effectual; the relief is ſlow, expenſive, and uſually impracticable; a numerous garriſon has been long ſupported there at an exorbitant expence, and the place was always wreſted from us at the beginning of a war, when only, if at any time, it could by any poſſibility prove advantageous.—I arraign not the

defenders

defenders of this poſt, neither the memory of the veteran BLAKENEY, nor the valour of its late gallant commander; the public voice has acquitted them from cenſure, and the ſtricteſt examination has proved that Fort Saint Philip was defended to the utmoſt, and, by ſuch defence, found to be far from impregnable.

But, what MINORCA cannot at this time, and never could ſupply, GIBRALTAR has at all times, while in our poſſeſſion, moſt effectually afforded; the former, on the fulleſt trial, is ceded for its inſufficiency; the latter, at all hazards, even at the riſque of the continuance of war, retained in our poſſeſſion: GIBRALTAR, ſevering the ocean from the Mediterranean, and protecting our trade in both; dividing Toulon from Breſt and Rochfort, and Carthagena from Cadiz and Ferrol; ſeparating the maritime forces of France and Spain, and materially weakening them by ſuch ſeparation; GIBRALTAR, in

ſhort,

ſhort, of infinite importance to Britain, and ſtill rendered more dear to us by its late glorious defence, ſhould never be ceded but with the laſt ſhip of Britain; the ceſſion of Minorca, like the amputation of a decaying limb, muſt add vigour to Gibraltar, to which, as of abſolute neceſſity to our naval independence, every attention ſhould be paid to the remoteſt period.

WEST FLORIDA is retained by Spain, and EAST FLORIDA ceded to her by theſe preliminaries; we have tried Weſt Florida ſince our poſſeſſion of it by the laſt peace, and found it of very little importance in any line of national conſideration; poſſeſſed of no good harbours, unhealthy in its climate, and limited in its extent to the Northward, it has hung as a millſtone round the neck of Britain; in the view of ſound policy it may be reckoned prudent to place Spain as the near neighbour of the American ſtates;

contention muſt neceſſarily ariſe where intereſts are really oppoſite, and from ſuch contentions our late fellow citizens will ſoon be taught to perceive the neceſſity of changing their preſent line of policy, and of eſtabliſhing a political and commercial alliance with this country, by whoſe miſtaken ſelfiſhneſs they were urged to an immature and precipitate ſeparation.

EAST FLORIDA, barren, ſandy, unhealthy, and unſheltered, lies nearly in the ſame predicament; no real ſtrength is, by the ceſſion of this province, added to Spain; nor will its boaſted culture of the vine, nor its Greek colony, nor its other Utopian projects, ever prove in any degree ſubſtantially advantageous: when, by the peace of Paris, it was yielded to Britain, and its various microſcopic benefits holden up and magnified to the public eye by the miniſterial KATTERFELTO's of that day, one of them, and not the leaſt

leaſt honeſt, and uſually not the worſt informed, could find nothing ſo uſeful in its ſuppoſed numerous products as the abundance of peat, which he alledged might moſt profitably be exported to Jamaica, and the other Weſt India iſlands —Whether as *Auditor*, or in any other capacity, I believe that very reſpectable gentleman has not ſince been enabled to diſcover, in the boſom of his favourite Florida, any thing more materially beneficial than that ſpecies of fuel, with which he intended to have warmed his *ſhivering* countrymen *between the Tropics.*

If the poſſeſſion of Eaſt Florida could ever have been ſuppoſed uſeful to Britain, its ſuppoſed utility muſt have been founded on the idea that the poſſeſſor of that province commands the navigation of the Gulph of Florida, and thus controuls the Flota's of Spain in their return from the Gulph of Mexico to Europe—to ſupport this poſition, it ſhould

be granted, that East Florida is possessed of harbours or good roads fit for vessels of force, where they may wait the approach of their expected prey; the contrary of this position is the known and direct truth; the only neighbouring possessions which, in any degree, command the passage of Florida are the Bahama islands, which are now restored to us, and which have, at all times of a war with Spain, most materially injured her commerce and power in that part of the world.

A prudent and attentive minister will build on the 4th Article of the preliminaries with Spain, a solid commercial establishment for his country on the continent of South America, productive of many national benefits, as well from the cutting logwood as from a beneficial connection with the Creole Spaniards, and other natives of the Bays of Honduras, and Campeachy and the Peninsula of Yucatan.

No

No man of political ſagacity can be found at this day, who will coolly and impartially deny the neceſſity of our acknowledgment of the Independence of the United States of America.—If peace with them be the object of our warmeſt deſire; if a return of their friendſhip be a circumſtance devoutly to be wiſhed for, and ardently to be purſued; if by a commercial alliance with them the drooping commerce of this country may be reſtored to its primitive vigour; if national harmony and unanimity be deſireable in the preſent ſtate of theſe diſtracted kingdoms; if it be the juſt policy of this country to prevent the overſpreading growth of the Houſe of Bourbon, from whoſe branches drops of a poiſonous nature muſt always fall on its inferior neighbours; if theſe, or a thouſand concurrent reaſons can ſanctify this meaſure, it ſtands fully juſtified in the preſent ſituation of things, as a plan of wiſdom and good policy, founded on the immutable laws

of

of nature, and the eternal principles of equity.—It ſeems abſurd to make any obſervations on this part of the treaty with America, as all men are now cured of that national frenzy which lately inflamed the natives of Britain in purſuit of that hideous fantom *unconditional ſubmiſſion*.

The experiment of ſubduing America has been tried, but tried in vain; but, in all projects, though the point originally ſought may be found inattainable, many diſcoveries are made of the higheſt importance and utility; we may now learn from our dearly purchaſed experience, that a very great extent of remote territory is ſeldom deſireable; that as colonies on a widely-extended continent enlarge and become populous, they will, and they neceſſarily muſt, gradually recede from the controul of the original ſtate;—the natural world gives the example; the ſwarm, once ſeparated from the hive, feels and aſſerts its independence; the eaglet,

who

who for the first time tries the power of his wings, rejoices in the success of the trial, and builds his own aëry beyond the controul of his parent; even man, individual man, when adult, is attached to those from whom he has received his being, more by the ties of reason and gratitude, than by any bond of physical instinct, or any obligation of positive duty; nor is the son bound by any law human or divine to sacrifice his own immediate interests or the prospects of his posterity to the caprice or injustice of an unnatural father.

But this is not now a point worthy of ethical discussion—whether this be a revolution founded on nature or equity or not, it is evidently built on the broad base of sound policy, and indeed of absolute necessity.

Some ill consequences are apprehended as likely to arise from this creation of a new

new power beyond the Atlantic; a power which ſome ſee, by anticipation, already annihilating our navy, and deſtroying our commerce; it may be neceſſary to advert to this ſubject.

Many years, nay generations, muſt paſs before America can become a populous, and, conſequently, a manufacturing country; in an extended country, agriculture precedes manufactures; her aſpiring and impatient ſettlers will penetrate the receſſes of the country, and long wander before they can fix in eſtabliſhments able to cope with thoſe of Great Britain in many branches of uſeful manufacture; in the woollen trade particularly, from the dearneſs of labour and the abſolute want of the *primum*, ſhe muſt ever be deficient, and be principally ſupplied from theſe kingdoms.

A navy is the ſlow growth of time, and ages will elapſe before that of America

can

can ſingly cope with that of Britain; the the American oak decays ſpeedily, which muſt cauſe the neceſſity of eternal renewal and reparation; the expences of a great navy are enormous and perpetual—A regular and extenſive trade; an ample national revenue; a ſettled plan of ſyſtematic finance; a ſingle, concentered, executive power; an united, active, and intelligent legiſlature; theſe and many other points not yet attainable, muſt precede the great naval power of America.

America cannot very long remain a ſingle power:—compoſed of various and diſcordant governments; of provinces ſpread thro' half the hemiſphere, different in climates and ſoils, jarring in habits and intereſts, oppoſite in principles and religion, ſeparated by local prejudices and narrow jealouſies, and ready to draw the ſword of civil war when the COMMON CAUSE, which now unites them, ſhall ceaſe to have an object; America, thus

circumſtanced, can never, for any length of time, continue to act as *one entire and formidable whole*, or become dangerous to the liberties and independence of this country.

America will turn her arms againſt herſelf, long before ſhe can become effectually dreadful to her neighbours; that convulſion which, in ſome future period, may render her government deſpotic at home, may contribute to render her formidable to foreign nations.

In the mean time the induſtry and activity of our merchants and manufacturers may be well exerted in retracing the old, and opening new channels of commerce with that great continent, and I believe, at the moment in which I write, this city has received orders to an incredible amount to ſupply the commercial wants of America.—May this beginning be proſperous! may it be the harbinger

of

of ſocial connection and uſeful alliance between the two nations, to ſubſiſt to the remoteſt poſterity!

The limits are ſettled by this treaty with the utmoſt preciſion, and, by that circumſtance, the uſual cauſe of diſpute between contiguous nations is removed; the navigation of the rivers and lakes, through which the boundary line is ſuppoſed to paſs, is common to both nations as far within land as the hardieſt trader has yet ventured to penetrate; ſpace is not wanting to either country; what remains to us, nearly the ancient Canada, is ſo extenſive as to render a famous calculation probable, that the acceſſion of one hundred millions of inhabitants ſpread over that colony would not render it as populous as the iſland of Great Britain: the excluſive poſſeſſion of Hudſon's Bay, joined to the navigation of the lakes, of the Miſſiſſippi, and the Saint Lawrence, muſt give us ſuperior advantages in the

fur trade; Montreal and Trois Rivieres have long been the great Indian marts for every ſpecies of peltry; the tranſportation of them to Quebec, and thence to England, is ſpeedy, eaſy, and not expenſive; no long land-carriage; no Apalachias mountains to croſs; no remoteneſs from the habitations of the perſons employed in the trade; in ſhort, none of the many difficulties lie in our way with which the Americans muſt long ſtruggle, and under which that branch of our commerce declined daily until we became maſters of Canada.

The fiſheries of Newfoundland were for a conſiderable time the only nurſeries of our ſeamen, while our domeſtic fiſheries were moſt ſcandalouſly neglected; we knew not the wealth which the author of nature had moſt liberally ſpread all around our coaſts, and of which we were the undoubted proprietors; true policy would have induced us to purſue the

one

one ſource of wealth without neglecting the other; in our preſent ſituation, were we diſpoſed to attempt the monopoly of this fiſhery, we muſt fail in the attempt; France already ſhares it with us under the faith of ancient treaties, of which her preſent importance enables her to demand the confirmation; America claims it by long and eſtabliſhed preſcription, as a part of thoſe rights appendant to her ſeveral governments, and naturally annexed to the proximity of her ſituation.—Can we ſeek for an alliance with America, demand an oblivion of mutual injuries, and ſolicit a commercial and uſeful intercourſe, and, at the ſame inſtant refuſe to our newly-reconciled deareſt connection what we have granted to our ancient and dangerous competitor? Such a proceeding would little promote the conciliation ſo much deſired, nor could we, without a perpetual hoſtility with America, prevent her participation of the fiſhery of Newfoundland.

The

The ocean ſtill ſpreads an ample ſpace for our activity and induſtry; the Banks of Newfoundland, the fiſheries of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, of the Labrador, of Cape Breton, and of Nova Scotia ſtill remain unexhauſted; the fiſheries of the North of Scotland are moſt abundant, and entirely ours by every right of propriety, yet we have long ſhared them with our neighbours of Holland; the fiſheries of the north-weſt coaſt of Ireland, both of herrings and white-fiſh, are ſufficient to enable us to man our navy, and repleniſh our treaſury, if we do not continue to neglect them; the Nymph Bank between England and Ireland, and another great bank, as yet little known, to the weſtward of fifty-two degrees latitude, and about twenty leagues from Ireland, will yet become of infinite importance when a wiſe and attentive adminiſtration ſhall turn its eyes to thoſe great foundations of natural proſperity.

I have

I have heard, ſince the publication of the proviſional treaty, that diſcontents are artfully fomented among the American Loyaliſts, and that they are taught to believe they have been intentionally ſacrificed by adminiſtration to views of ſordid and ungrateful policy; to examine the nature of this charge we muſt recur to the conſtitution of the American government to decide, whether the Commiſſioners appointed by Congreſs, or Congreſs itſelf, can, on ſuch an occaſion, do more than recommend the reſtitution of confiſcated eſtates to the humanity, policy, and juſtice of the ſeveral legiſlatures.

My ſubject, widening to my view as I advance, has led me unwarily to a greater length than I had at firſt foreſeen, I ſhall therefore be as brief as poſſible on this point, and what may follow.

By the celebrated articles of confederation of the Thirteen American States, exe-

executed at Philadelphia on the 9th of July 1778, the ſeveral legiſlatures of thoſe ſtates delegated particular powers to Congreſs for ſpecial purpoſes, among others thoſe of peace and war, the general controul of expenditure for the common intereſt, the deciſion of all diſputes of boundaries and juriſdictions among the ſeveral ſtates, and many others of a ſimilar public and general nature.—— By the ſecond article of this confederation, "*each ſtate retains its ſovereignty, freedom, and independence; and every power, juriſdiction, and right, which is not by this confederation expreſsly delegated in the United States in Congreſs aſſembled:*" among other rights not delegated to Congreſs, and conſequently reſerved, is that of each ſtate to puniſh its own ſubjects for treaſon and other crimes by death, confiſcation of property, or in any other manner preſcribed by its own municipal laws.

This

This right each ſtate has frequently exerciſed with the utmoſt ſeverity, and many of thoſe unhappy men, called Loyaliſts, have been the victims.—Congreſs, the great aſſembly of the United States, like the council of Amphyctions of ancient Greece, cannot mould or regulate the internal policy of each ſtate, nor enter into any ſtipulations with foreign powers for that purpoſe; what the commiſſioners of congreſs can do, has been done; they have agreed that congreſs ſhall *earneſtly recommend* the intereſts of the ſeveral claſſes of loyaliſts to the different ſtates, and *a re-conſideration and reviſion of all acts and laws regarding the premiſes, ſo as to render the ſaid laws or acts perfectly conſiſtent not only with juſtice and equity, but with that ſpirit of conciliation, which, on the return of the bleſſings of peace, ſhould univerſally prevail.*

Who can doubt that this recommendation will be complied with, and that the

ſeveral ſtates of America will ſee the good policy of proclaiming a general amneſty, of repealing all laws of attainder and confiſcation, and of thereby retaining within the boſom of their country thouſands of induſtrious and active citizens, who muſt otherwiſe emigrate to the provinces of Canada or Nova Scotia, or into our Weſt India iſlands, and thus contribute additional force and population to thoſe countries dependent on the mother country.

I hold it clear that adminiſtration will not relax in its endeavours to obtain, for ſuch of thoſe unhappy men as may continue to deſire it, a re-eſtabliſhment in their native country; the governing powers of Great Britain are bound by every tye of conſcience and gratitude to thoſe perſons, who from an exceſs of ill managed loyalty, or rather devotion, ſacrificed every thing to the ſupport of their be-

beloved idol, THE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

But, if America ſhall add impolicy to ſeverity, and ſhall permit party ſpirit or private intereſts to oppoſe the reſtitution of theſe men to the rights of her citizens, it ſuits the dignity and honour of this great ſtate to make them ſome compenſation, either by grants in the provinces I already mentioned, or by ſettling them on the waſte and foreſt lands of this country, or in ſome other manner which may be adopted on mature deliberation.

Thus I have gone through all the material parts of the preliminary Articles and proviſional Treaty, which have certainly confirmed a great and unprecedented revolution, and muſt form a moſt diſtinguiſhed æra in the annals of mankind. Great Britain has loſt conſiderably on the whole, but her loſſes are unavoidable,

and a prudent adminiſtration and wiſe legiſlature may in one point imitate the Almighty, and deduce *Good* from *Evil*— By concentring the remaining forces of the Britiſh empire; by cultivating a liberal and amicable intercourſe with Ireland; by the practice of public œconomy, and the fair encouragement of every ſpecies of national induſtry; by avoiding, as much as honour and ſound policy will permit, all ruinous wars and burthenſome foreign connections; by a ſyſtematic reduction of the national debt; by a leſs oppreſſive and expenſive mode of collecting the revenue; by a liberal and equal plan of taxation; by a complete and regular ſupport of a powerful navy; and by the adoption of ſome other great *political deſiderata*, much may be done to preſerve this a moſt powerful and illuſtrious nation, the great directreſs of commerce, the enlightened ſchool of arts, and the powerful arbitreſs of nations.

Is there a miniſter endued with ability and integrity ſufficient for this arduous undertaking? Are there ſenators upright, intelligent, and active enough to co-operate in the glorious project? Let ſuch enter on the honourable taſk, convinced that the wiſe and virtuous of the preſent age will ſupport them, and that our lateſt poſterity will hail their names with gratitude and veneration.

THE END.